

PI-Specific

- What kind of lab management style do you have? Hands-on? Hands-off? Do you have group meetings? Do you have one-on-one meetings?
- How often do you travel?
- Do you plan on moving? Do you want to move?
- Do you do any STEM outreach activities?
- How many publications do students usually graduate with?
- How many hours a week do you expect of your graduate students?
- How long do students usually take to graduate?
- Do you encourage attending conferences?
- What kind of resources does your laboratory have access to?
- What kinds of funding does the lab have?
- How many graduate students are you looking to take next year? How many do you usually take?

Program-Specific

- Are there cumulative exams?
- How is the program set-up?
- Are there proficiency exams?
- Does the department have a seminar series?
- How are students and advisors paired? How likely is it I will get my #1?
- What is the policy on changing labs if you are unhappy later on?

Student-Specific

- Do you like it here?
- Does your professor respect your boundaries/give you a break/understand that you're a human being?
- What kinds of things do you hope to do after graduating from here? Have other people that have gone here done something similar?
- What advice would you have for a new graduate student?
- What are some good places to live?
- How long does it actually take? How many hours do you actually work?
- What are some reasons people leave the department?

General Considerations

- Are there multiple advisors I could reasonably work with at this school? Do they have mentoring styles that I would thrive with?
- What will be expected of me at U of X vs U of Y? Are the hours/responsibility/time off exceptionally different? Do the people there seem like people I can work with?
- Would I be okay living there? Will I be able to live reasonably on my stipend/financial aid/savings? [Making budgets for different locations that factor in rent for the area helps.] How far am I from family, and am I alright with that? Are there opportunities for my spouse/significant other?
- Which schools have policies in place to protect me, if I'm in a minority group? Are the environment and community accepting of my minority group? Does the school offer mental health services? What happens if I get married/get pregnant?

To Ask Yourself

- Can I reasonably see myself living here for 3-5+ years?
- Do these people seem like people I can get along with?
- How far am I from family with this program? Am I ok with that?
- What should I be doing this summer? Should I be working as much as possible so I can afford to move? Should I be studying all day and night for proficiency exams?
- Are there multiple professors I can seriously see myself working with, in case I am unable to work with my #1?

After a Decision

- What transportation options are there? Is parking on campus an issue? Are there busses? Is it safe to ride a bike?
- Will I be able to have a student, staff, or either health insurance plan?
- What major branch banks are in the area (i.e., will I have to switch who I have my debit card with)?
- What mental health resources are available in the area? [Even if you don't end up needing them, having done research on it may serve useful to a friend.]